DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 460 186 UD 034 631

AUTHOR Wong, Kenneth K.; Anagnostopoulos, Dorothea; Rutledge, Stacey; Edwards, Claudia

TITLE The Challenge of Improving Instruction in Urban High Schools: Case Studies of the Implementation of the Chicago Academic Standards.

SPONS AGENCY Spencer Foundation, Chicago, IL.; Department of Education, Washington, DC.

PUB DATE 2001-06-07

NOTE 80p.

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Academic Standards; Accountability; Administrator Attitudes; Board of Education Policy; Case Studies; Educational Improvement; High Schools; Standardized Tests; *Student Evaluation; Teacher Attitudes; *Urban Schools

IDENTIFIERS African Americans; Chicago Public Schools IL

ABSTRACT

In 1998, the Chicago Public Schools piloted the Chicago Academic Standards Exam (CASE) to assess how well students had learned the content and processes delineated in the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) and Frameworks. This report examines the implementation of district curricular standards and assessments and the effects on teaching in four high schools. Researchers collected district-level curricular standards, materials concerning the CASE given to schools and teachers, and the district's Programs of Study. They interviewed central office administrators involved in developing and implementing the standards and assessments and teachers and administrators at the four schools regarding their responses to the CAS and CASE. They observed teachers at each school teach the same lesson and gathered work from high- and low-achieving students in those classes. Results indicated that district-wide standards in English represented multiple curricular and instructional goals; stated goals were displaced as standards were translated into the Programs of Study and CASE; teachers' curricular decisions and instructional choices were very similar across schools; teachers responded most to regulatory aspects of the standards and assessments (with the CASE exam structuring the curriculum); and teachers received only limited professional development regarding the standards and assessments. (Contains 17 tables and 18 endnotes.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

U.D

ED 460 186

The Challenge of Improving Instruction in Urban High Schools:

Case Studies of the Implementation of the Chicago Academic Standards

Kenneth K. Wong
Dorothea Anagnostopoulos
Stacey Rutledge
Claudia Edwards

University of Chicago

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Rutledge

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

June 7, 2001

We are grateful to the Field-Initiated Studies Education Research Grant Program at the U.S. Department of Education and the Research on School Reform Initiative at the Spencer Foundation. The opinions expressed here are solely those of the authors and not of the U.S. Department of Education or the Spencer Foundation. Research assistance was provided by Jenifer Blaxall, Sophia Hughes, Valerie Moyer, Simrit Dhesi, and Sarah Graff.

Direct all correspondence to Professor Kenneth Wong at ken.wong@vanderbilt.edu.

UD034631

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION
- *Summary of findings*
- *Policy Implications*

II. STUDY OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

III. DISTRICT-WIDE ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS
- *Policy mechanisms in Chicago's Educational Accountability Agenda*
- *The Role of Standards and Assessments in the District's Accountability Agenda*
- *Analysis of the Program of Study*
- *The CASE exam*

IV. TEACHER PERCEPTIONS: FINDINGS FROM OUR INTERVIEWS
- *Teachers' Responses to District Implementation of Standards and Assessments*
- *Pressures of the CASE*
- *Conclusion*

V. INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES
- *Time allocation and instructional activities.*
- *Analysis of Recitations--Taxonomy*
- *Teacher-student interactions*
- *Conclusion*

VI. CONCLUSION
- *Summary of Findings*
- *Policy Implications*

List of Tables

Table 1: *District Policies Classified by Degree of Central Direction*

Table 2: Characteristics of Case Study High Schools

Table 3: Percent of Teachers Reporting Type of District Support for Standards and Assessments, 1998-99

Table 4: Percent of Teachers Reporting Use of Program of Study, 1998-99

Table 5: Percent of Teachers Reporting Effects of CASE on Curriculum and Instruction, 1998-99

Table 6: Percent of Time Spent on Standardized Test Preparation, 1998-99

Table 7: *Percentage of Time Teachers Allocate to Instructional Activities*

Table 8: Definition of Activity Types

Table 9: Types of Literary Questions

Table 10: Types of Oral Teacher Questions Across Instructional Unit

Table 11: Classroom Written Assignments by Type

Table 12: Types of Questions on Written Assignments

Table 13: Types of Oral Student Questions Across Instructional Units

Table 14: Analysis of Instructional Moments Following Simple Inferential Questions

Table 15: Analysis of Instructional Moments Following Complex Inferential Questions

Table 16: By Teacher Analysis of Instructional Moments Following Complex Inferential Questions

Table 17. By Teacher Analysis of Instructional Moments Following Simple Inferential-Type Questions

The Challenge of Improving Instruction in Urban High Schools:
Case Studies of the Implementation of the Chicago Academic Standards

Kenneth K. Wong
Dorothea Anagnostopoulos
Stacey Rutledge
Claudia Edwards

University of Chicago

I. INTRODUCTION AND STUDY OBJECTIVES

Efforts to improve schools through curricular standards and aligned assessments have gained increasing prominence over the past two decades. Almost all states have curricular standards as well as assessments intended to measure how well students have met these standards. In addition, school districts, particularly urban districts, have begun to institute their own curricular standards and assessments. In June 1998, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) introduced content-based standards and frameworks at the ninth and tenth grade levels in the core academic subjects: math, English, science and social studies. That same year, the district piloted the Chicago Academic Standards Exam (CASE) to assess how well students had learned the content and processes delineated in the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) and Frameworks (CAF).

Standards have been hailed by proponents as levers to improve teaching and learning at the district and state-wide levels. The difficulty of this task, particularly for urban districts, must be considered if we are to better understand the potential that this type of reform holds. To be sure, Chicago has made rapid gains in student and school performance in the last four years. Nonetheless, like many other urban school districts, Chicago continues to face high rates of student and school failure. At the end of the

1998-99 school year, in Chicago high schools, on the average, approximately 50% of ninth and tenth graders failed one or more core subjects, while 32.2% of students scored at national norms on standardized reading tests.[1] District and school efforts to implement curricular standards and assessments must be understood within the context of enormous academic challenge.

This report examines the implementation of district curricular standards and assessments and the effects of this implementation on teaching in four case study high schools in Chicago. In Section III, after explaining our methodology, we conduct an in-depth examination of the district's goals and intentions for its standards and frameworks. In Section IV, we turn to the question of how teachers respond to curricular standards, frameworks and assessments and how they shape instructional and classroom practices. In Section V, we delve into how teachers across schools taught the same piece of literature: *To Kill a Mockingbird.*[2] In this analysis, we examine multiple dimensions of classroom practice and interaction, ranging from the distribution of classroom activities to analyses of teacher-student dynamics. Finally, our conclusion offers policy recommendations, including strategies to raise the bar of instructional practices.

Chicago's standards and assessments are obviously implemented within the larger context of the district's accountability agenda. In order to understand the nature of this agenda, we develop a differentiated understanding of the Chicago accountability agenda to the district's curriculum and assessments policy. Table 1 suggests that Chicago's accountability agenda entails a mixture of regulation, support, and professional discretion. The success of the agenda in improving teaching and learning within the district's schools rests, in part, upon the balance the district strikes among these policy

mechanisms. Chicago's efforts to implement curricular standards and assessments must be understood within the context of this larger agenda.

Within this accountability agenda, the standards and assessments serve as the district's main tool to guide curriculum and instruction. A close analysis of the district's Programs of Study, the document that turns standards into curricular and instructional guidelines, and the CASE, reveals both the intent of the district and how the standards are being translated into practice. Through interviews with teachers we assess their implementation. We examine teachers' perceptions of standards and assessments. Through classroom observations and analyses, we look at the choices made by teachers and the opportunities provided to students. In light of the district goal to improve literacy, develop students' critical thinking skills, and set clear curricular expectations, our study provides field-based findings into how teachers negotiate these multiple demands.

Summary of Findings

Clearly the intent of the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) and the CASE exam by the district and its implementation by teachers is complex. The findings from our multi-level analysis into the implementation of the Chicago Academic Standards and Frameworks and its related assessment, the CASE, follow:

- *Districtwide standards in English represent multiple curricular and instructional goals.*

District goals stated in the CAS document serve not only to regulate curricular and instructional decisions, but also to support teachers by clarifying key instructional

goals and objectives. A close analysis of Chicago's standards reveals that their scope is impressive and represents a cross-section of different approaches to teaching English. Standards include a multi-cultural and historical approach to English instruction as well as constructivist, and conventional, text-centered approaches.

- *Stated goals are displaced as standards are translated into the Programs of Study and CASE.*

A funneling process occurs as the standards and frameworks are translated into documents intended to guide teachers' instruction and assessment. While a broad array of goals is reflected in the CAS, these are not represented in the Programs of Study and the CASE. Those goals that remain tend to be ones that are easily measured and assessed.

- *Teachers' curricular decisions and instructional choices are remarkably similar across the four schools in our study.*

Teachers' reported objectives for the instructional unit, *To Kill a Mockingbird,* were remarkably similar across schools. Teachers' main goals were to have students understand the plot and main themes of the novel. In terms of classroom activities, teachers devoted most of their time to literal comprehension of the novel. This is reflected in their choice of activities, such as having students read silently or orally and reviewing the chosen selection, and in an analysis of the types of questions posed to their classes. No time was spent on discussion.

- *Teachers respond most to the regulatory aspect of the standards and assessments.* [3] *The CASE exam is serving to structure the curriculum.*

The CASE is the dominant mechanism guiding teachers' curricular and instructional decisions. Teachers are allocating time to the curriculum tested in the CASE. They are prioritizing coverage of material over critical thinking skills. Their instructional practices reflect a focus on literal comprehension over more complex thinking skills. They are practicing writing as modeled by the exam.

- *The district and the schools have provided teachers with only limited support in the form of professional development related to the standards and assessments.*

As a consequence, teachers' ideas on how to respond are developed either individually or with fellow department members. While this contributes to curricular alignment, it does not lead to teachers experimenting with different instructional approaches. In our analysis of instructional activities, we observed very little cooperative learning or student-centered activities. Even games, aimed at greater student participation, were veiled recitations with teachers asking students literal questions.

Policy Implications

- *The district needs to be clearer on its goals for the standards and assessments. Diverse student academic needs may require differentiated curriculum and instruction.*

Is the main goal of the district to align curriculum? Develop higher order thinking skills? Guide teachers' instructional practices? Improve literacy? As the standards are transformed into frameworks of practice, many of these goals are lost. As currently structured, the standards and assessments are leading to a common denominator of instruction. Yet different students have different needs. Our case study schools range

from a college prep magnet school to a reconstituted school. Yet, we observed common forms of instruction across schools. Students already scoring at grade level should be focusing on different skills than those struggling with basic literacy. Yet currently we do not see any differentiation between the instruction given to distinct populations. The district needs to provide clearer support to teachers based on the unique demands of their student population, not only across schools but also within schools.

- *With teachers modifying their instruction to meet curricular demands, both district and schools have an opportunity to influence not only teachers curricular decisions but also their instructional practices.*

Findings from this study indicate that teachers focus primarily on literal comprehension and use a limited number of activities in their classrooms. This suggests a basic proficiency on the part of the teachers and the district. If the district wants to raise the bar of instructional activity, it needs to provide sustained professional development, either through district programs or in the schools, aligned with district goals modeling an array of approaches. If the goal of the CAS and CASE is indeed to set basic proficiency levels, then it is consistent with the current practice. If, however, the district wants to raise the bar, it needs to re-evaluate its current approach to presenting and preparing teachers for the CASE.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

Chicago s standards and assessments are implemented within a larger accountability agenda. Since district policy occurs within a complex organization, we took a multi-level approach to examine how the standards and assessments were

implemented and how this implementation affected teaching and learning. At the district level, we collected curricular standards, copies of materials concerning the CASE that the district provided to schools and teachers, and the district's Programs of Study. We also interviewed central office administrators involved in the development and implementation of the standards and assessments.

In order to assess teachers' responses to the CAS and CASE, we interviewed math and English teachers in four Chicago public high schools. The high schools have received varying levels of district intervention over the course of the last three years. School A has never been on probation, School B was taken off probation after one year, School C remains on probation for the fourth year, and School D has been reconstituted; teachers had to reapply for their jobs at the end of the 1997-98 school year. Table 2 provides demographic and test score information for each school. The schools differ in terms of the racial and ethnic backgrounds of their students. Their student populations, however, are all overwhelmingly low-income. School D has the lowest percentage of students scoring at national norms on the TAP reading exam of the four schools, while School A has the highest.

At each school, we interviewed the principal, administrators in charge of instruction, the academy resource teacher, and math and English teachers. Interviews focused on how individuals understood and responded to the district's standards and assessments, and how district policies affected the distribution and use of instructional resources. Because the district assessments affect only ninth and tenth grade teachers, this study focuses on the interviews we conducted with these teachers.[4]

In order to assess the influence of the district standards and assessments on teaching practices, we observed two tenth grade teachers in each school teach *To Kill a Mockingbird*.[5] The district mandates that teachers teach this novel and the tenth grade CASE tests students knowledge of it. We observed one section of English II taught by each teacher and took verbatim accounts of classroom instruction over the course of the instructional unit. Audio tapes of classrooms were recorded and transcribed. Each class was observed at least eight times over the course of the unit. Because of time constraints, we were not able to observe the beginning of the units in School B and School C. We collected observations over the course of the second half of the school year. Different teachers taught the unit at different times of the semester.

In addition, we asked teachers to identify two high-achieving students, two average-achieving students, and two low-achieving students relative to the class observed. We collected all of the work these students completed during the course of the unit. Finally, we interviewed the teachers observed to understand in more detail how they used district support and documents to plan their instruction, their goals and objectives for the unit, and their assessment of the unit s effectiveness with students.

While we believe that our study provides valuable insight into how Chicago s attempt to implement district-wide curricular standards and assessments affects teachers instructional practices, there are some limitations to our findings. First, we examined only four high schools. Although the schools have encountered a wide range of district interventions, the generalizability of our findings is obviously limited. Second, this study focuses on only one instructional unit. It does not allow us to see how teachers have responded to the district s curricular policy throughout that entire academic year. Taken

as a whole, however, our multiple methods are complementary and contribute to a fairly comprehensive understanding of the implementation and effects of the district's standards and assessments policy as it currently exists.

III. DISTRICT-WIDE ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Policy mechanisms in the District's Educational Accountability Agenda

The CAS and CASE represent just one component of the district's educational accountability agenda. Other elements of this agenda include an academic promotion policy for students that mandates grade retention for poorly performing students, and a probation policy that places schools with less than 15% of their students scoring at national norms on standardized tests of reading and math under district intervention with the threat of reconstitution and possible closure. It also includes policies that specifically affect high schools. These high school specific policies center around changes in the curriculum and in how students progress through high school. The district has increased graduation requirements for high schools students, reduced the number of elective courses students can take, and increased math, science and foreign language requirements. The district has also designated the first two years of high school as the Junior Academy, and the last two as the Senior Academy. Students in the Junior Academy (ninth and tenth graders) must earn credits in all of the core academic subjects and achieve grade-level equivalent scores on the Test of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) in order to progress to the Senior Academy. According to the district's 1997 High School Redesign Plan, students in the Senior Academy enroll in more specialized courses and programs, including Career Academies and junior college courses.

In previous reports, we examined how these district policies fared in the public schools.[6] We found that while sanctioning policies, exemplified by the academic promotion and probation policies, have drawn the most attention, the district's agenda also includes efforts to support school staff and to strengthen teachers' and principals' professional discretion. Table 1 categorizes the various strategies involved in the key components of the district's agenda. Several components of the agenda focus on regulating school, teacher, and student behavior and performance. Regulations take the form of sanctions, such as grade retention for low-performing students and the threat of restaffing associated with probation and reconstitution. Support policies represent district efforts to assist schools, teachers, and students to improve performance. One example of a support policy is the use of external partners, or consultants, to assist in improving instruction in schools on probation and reconstitution. The district's agenda also includes components that reinforce school-level discretion. For example, principals and teachers have the freedom to design the Junior and Senior Academies as they see fit.

To be sure, teachers and school-level administrators have responded differently to the regulatory, supportive and discretionary aspects of the district's accountability agenda. In our comparison of four high schools with varying degrees of academic success, we found that teachers and school-level administrators generally supported district efforts that allowed for their professional discretion, such as the academy initiative.[7] Teachers and principals spoke positively about the Junior Academy structure. They also responded to sanctioning policies, particularly, probation. This response, however, varied depending on the degree to which the school was subject to, or threatened by, probation. Thus while schools restructured teachers' time to include staff

development focused on teaching reading strategies and test-taking skills, it was primarily those teachers in schools under probation and reconstitution who allocated significant amounts of classroom time to these activities. Based on our analyses of approximately 200 hours of classroom observations, we found that English teachers in the reconstituted school spent 60% of the observed time on test skills development activities and 3% of the time on test preparation. In contrast, teachers in the case study school that was not subject to any district intervention spent 0% of their English instructional time on test practice activities. [8]

Teacher response to district support efforts tended to be mixed. Key supportive components in the district's agenda included the creation of external partners for low-performing schools, district curriculum for student advisories, and funds for teachers' common planning time. In schools under probation and reconstitution, conflict arose between teachers and external partners. In effect, what was seen as "support" by the district, was perceived more as a "sanction" by the teachers. Further, the majority of the teachers interviewed across the schools rejected district efforts to institute advisories and their attendant curriculum. The district's goal for advisories was to provide social and personal support to high school students. Teacher resistance to this program resulted in the district revising the advisory curriculum to focus more on academic skills and less on social and personal issues.

The Role of Standards and Assessments in the District's Accountability Agenda

Like its other core policies, the district's use of the curricular standards and assessments entails a combination of regulation, support, and professional discretion. As

a regulatory measure, district documents indicate that it intends to use CASE and TAP results to identify which schools to place on probation in the future. In addition, the CASE will be used to determine whether or not students can progress from the Junior to the Senior Academy.

At the same time, the district views the standards as a tool to support teachers by clarifying key instructional goals and objectives. The district also seeks to help teachers prepare students for the CASE through the creation of the Programs of Study and the Structured Curriculum. Both documents represent efforts by the district to help teachers incorporate the academic standards into their curriculum and instruction. The Programs of Study delineate those curricular standards that are tested on the CASE. In effect, they translate the standards into instructional units with set objectives and lengths. The Programs of Study for each core subject, then, play a key role in the implementation of the district's standards and assessments. The Programs of Study do not specify instructional activities or strategies which teachers must apply; they only provide suggestions. This, then, allows for professional discretion. In addition to the Programs of Study, the Structured Curriculum for each core subject includes unit plans that incorporate the district's standards. The district provided all teachers with a Structured Curriculum for their courses in the 1999-2000 school year, though it did not mandate that teachers use the Structured Curriculum. In other words, instruction is left to teachers' discretion.

In sum, the district's policies concerning the standards and assessments seek both to regulate teacher and student performance and to support teachers' efforts to "teach to the standards." They also provide teachers with discretion to select and develop

instructional activities within the district framework. Thus the relationship between regulation, support and professional discretion is particularly relevant to the implementation of curricular standards and assessments.

Instructional Role of the CAS, CASE and the Programs of Study

As noted above, the district's implementation of the standards and assessments involves regulatory, support and discretionary components. To what extent, however, does the district's implementation of the standards and assessments strike an effective balance between regulation and support? Do the standards serve only to hold teachers and students accountable for specific content, and thus represent a minimum proficiency level, or do they provide support to increase teachers instructional capacity? Are there signs to suggest that the CAS/CASE provide opportunities for long-term instructional improvement?

Interviews with both teachers and district administrators indicate that thus far the district has used the standards and frameworks primarily as an accountability tool. There are, however, some supports provided by the district in terms of preparing teachers for the CASE. Table 3 summarizes these main forms of district support. The large majority of teachers reported receiving the Programs of Study. Most teachers also reported that several weeks before the administration of the CASE they received sample questions and lists of literary terms. However, teachers did not have the CASE questions at the time they developed their curriculum because these questions were only distributed within two weeks of the CASE test. Additionally, Table 3 shows that very few teachers reported attending any staff development concerning how to teach the standards. Teachers who

did attend district meetings on the CASE reported that their function was primarily administrative□ providing teachers with information concerning the number and types of questions on the exam and how and when to administer it. Indeed, according to teacher interviews, the district did not fully provide teachers with a rationale for the structure and design of the CAS/CASE-based curriculum, nor did it systematically provide teachers with strategies to incorporate the standards into their lessons or instructional approaches associated with the standards.

These findings suggest that a long-term, sustained focus on instructional improvement remains somewhat unclear this early in the implementation process. It is important to note, however, that part of the reason for the limited focus on instructional improvement is likely due to the □newness□of the policy. As anticipated in the implementation literature, organizational adaptation to new goals takes time and resources.[9] A central office administrator involved in the creation of the standards and frameworks noted that there was negligible funding available to district officials to provide schools with staff development about the standards and frameworks. In the first year of implementation, schools had to request assistance or training from the district. This central office administrator noted that few schools would do this given the intense scrutiny of low-performing schools put into place by the district□s probation policy. Few schools would want to draw attention to their need for instructional guidance given this pressure. Policies such as these, constrained by a lack of resources, have had a marked effect on the balance between regulation and support. At the end of the second year of the CASE pilot, one district official noted that the CASE had become the □tail that

wagged the dog; the lack of adequate support for teachers to change their instruction resulted in instruction being driven by the assessments rather than the standards.

Linkage Between the CAS and the Programs of Study

In light of the limited scope of the district's staff development efforts, the Programs of Study and Structured Curriculum represent the district's primary mechanisms with which to support teachers in their implementation of the district standards. For the purposes of this report, we will focus on the Programs of Study, the first of these tools to be disseminated among teachers. Because the Programs of Study serve as the primary means of support the district provides teachers to teach to the standards, it is important to examine how the Programs of Study distills these instructional goals. This is particularly relevant as the Programs of Study are intended as a tool allowing teachers to create an instructional bridge between the standards and frameworks and the CASE exam. As one central office administrator said of the Programs of Study, "It's not all of what a teacher should teach. But for the purposes of assessments, this is what we have judged to be the important things your student should know."

In this study we examine how the district utilizes curricular standards and assessments to enforce accountability and to drive instructional improvement. Curricular standards and assessments typically serve two purposes. They hold schools and students accountable for teaching and learning particular skills and they provide teachers with curricular and instructional blueprints. Though most curricular standards, like those developed by professional associations such as the National Council of Math Teachers

(NCTM) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), delineate the key skills students should master in each subject while leaving instructional matters to teachers, they do imply instructional theories or approaches, and serve to support particular types of teaching practices.

What are the goals of the English standards and frameworks for ninth and tenth grades? Their scope is impressive, as they touch on an amalgam of various approaches to English instruction. Goals that require students to construct and extend meaning from the text suggest a constructivist approach, while objectives that state that students should know how to synthesize and evaluate ideas from various cultures, and illustrate how form, content, purpose and major themes of literary works reflect cultures, literary periods and ideas that shaped them, imply a multi-cultural and/or historical approach to literature. In addition, conventional, text-centered notions of English instruction also appear in the standards and frameworks. Students must learn to evaluate relationships between plot and subplot, connecting themes, character traits, motives, tone, point of view and setting in fictional selections of different genres and eras, and to draw conclusions concerning the use and impact of plot structure. These goals focus on students being able to identify the basic elements of different types of literature and non-fiction. The three objectives need not be mutually exclusive. Students need to consider how authors use structural elements in order to draw generalizations and make interpretations. Of central concern, however, is the priority the district places upon these various approaches.

A close analysis of the Program of Study for English that compares the Program to the district's standards and frameworks raises questions about the purposes of the

standards. The English Program of Study, as currently developed, focuses primarily upon a text-centered, conventional approach to English instruction that stresses the identification of the elements of different types of literature. The curriculum outlined in the Program of Study can be classified as what Applebee, Burroughs and Stevens call a "collections" type of curriculum structure, "where the parts that are included are selected for study as part of a set, such as Great Books, or Modes of Discourse."[10] The Program of Study divide the curriculum into units on different literary genres - non-fiction, drama, novels and short stories, and poetry. Works are selected because they represent the various genres and their elements are studied to identify what constitutes each type of genre. This type of curriculum structure provides only minimal coherence and lacks the conceptual organization required by the more complex forms of curriculum structure that Applebee et al identify as *episodic* and *integrated.*

In short, while the district's standards and frameworks use language that indicates the district's intent for teachers to employ constructivist approaches, the Program of Study indicates that the district holds teachers accountable only for teaching the basic literary elements of different types of writing. While the objectives in the Program of Study state that students should be able to identify themes, there is no mention of students engaging in constructing interpretations of literary works. Constructing interpretations entails drawing generalizations and developing arguments to support these generalizations. Identifying themes does not imply this type of analysis and elaboration.

It comes as no surprise, then, that despite the high-level objectives of the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS), the classroom teaching we observed, as we shall discuss shortly, by and large did not reflect the more challenging skills envisioned in the CAS.

This is in part a consequence of a *funneling process* through which the expansive goals of the CAS are narrowed for the purposes of teacher assistance (in the form of the Program of Study) and testing (in the form of the CASE). Because district support is directed at facilitating teacher preparation for the CASE exam, it is necessarily the more limited goals of the CASE exam that dominate teachers curricular choices. It is clear that the exigencies of assessment and accountability have resulted in setting aside those CAS goals that are not readily measured and assessed.

This funneling process encompasses several stages. As mentioned above, the broadest range of goals exists at the abstract level of the standards themselves. At this point the funnel is widest because no single curricular model is employed: the CAS incorporates numerous approaches to teaching. This variety of approaches is in part programmatic and in part attributable to the wide range of participants involved in developing the CAS, including teachers, local university partners, the Washington-based think-tank NCEES, as well as the Chicago Teachers Union. Additionally, various models were used as guides professional standards like the NCTE and the NCTM as well as the Illinois State standards and standards developed by other states. Given this wide range of input, the CAS proposes a variety of sound and at times innovative approaches to teaching. At the same time, it is not easy to encompass such a variety of directives within a single practical teaching guide and assessment tool.

It is in this move towards practicality that the funneling process begins. The Programs of Study seek to extract key goals from the CAS and offer suggestions that would render such goals tangible to teachers. The aim of the Program of Study, however, is not merely to serve as a professional support tool for Chicago Public School teachers.

It also serves as the blueprint from which the CASE exam is formulated and therefore represents the primary CASE-preparation resource for teachers. Thus, although the CASE exam is meant to assess the skills outlined in the CAS, in effect it is measuring those skills that were funneled from the CAS into the Program of Study. The Programs of Study, then, become the de facto determinant of what skills teachers should be teaching.

At this early phase of implementation, our analysis of the English Program of Study suggests that the standards tend to set a basic proficiency level. Because the Program of Study provides the teaching guidelines for the CASE exam, it is questionable whether teachers are being asked to alter their instructional methods in any substantial way. Since, according to district administrators, the English CASE exam generated the highest rate of passing scores and the fewest complaints, it seems the success of the exam is in part the result of its relatively traditional approach to English instruction. Indeed, as one central office administrator said of the English CASE, □It□s not much of a change from what teachers usually do anyway.□ It remains to be seen if the Program of Study will be revised to reflect higher expectations and more complex approaches to English instruction.

Analysis of the English CASE

The English CASE exam assesses students in two categories of achievement□ basic knowledge, and understanding and reasoning skills. While basic knowledge skills suggest recognition of literary terms and elements, understanding and reasoning skills suggest a range of text-based skills, from basic literal comprehension to understanding and interpreting implied meanings. Of 30 multiple choice questions on the English I and

II CASE Sample Exams, 14 (47%) of these are intended as basic knowledge questions, and 16 (53%) as understanding/reasoning questions. In addition to the multiple-choice section, there are 4 constructed response questions□ 3 short answers and one essay-style response. Constructed response questions fall into the understanding/reasoning category. Within this structure, in order for a student to attain the 50% mastery necessary to pass the English CASE, some portion of the understanding/reasoning questions must be answered correctly.

The district piloted the CASE in ninth grade algebra, English, social studies and science in June 1998. Central office officials reported that 75.8% of ninth graders passed the English CASE, 42.7% passed the history exams, 35.5% passed biology, and 35.5% passed the algebra.[11] According to interviews with district administrators, English teachers have been the least resistant to the district□s English standards and CASE. If the district□s standards and assessments were to have an effect on teachers' instructional practices, we would most expect to see this effect in English classrooms.

We analyzed the multiple choice questions on sample exams for English I and English II in order to make a more precise determination of what skills the CASE was testing. While it is important to note that our analysis was limited to sample exams, they nonetheless provide a meaningful blueprint for the actual exam. For the purposes of our analysis, we classified questions testing literary terms and elements as basic knowledge, and questions based on the meaning of text were classified as understanding/reasoning. We then further divided understanding/reasoning questions into the sub-categories of understanding□ questions based on information stated explicitly in the text--and reasoning□ questions demanding some level of interpretation or insight into the implied

meaning of the text. For the English I sample test, we found that the multiple-choice questions were evenly divided between basic knowledge and understanding/reasoning questions. We further determined that of the 13 understanding/reasoning questions, 6 (23%) were understanding questions and 7 (27%) could be categorized as reasoning questions. For the English II sample test, there was a slightly larger emphasis on basic understanding questions (58% of the total). 17% of the total questions were understanding questions and 25% were reasoning questions. In both sample exams, approximately 25% of the multiple-choice questions could be classified as reasoning questions. This reveals a far greater emphasis on questions testing students' ability to recognize literary elements and clearly stated textual information as opposed to their ability to interpret and evaluate information.

The constructed response section of the English CASE is intended to test students' ability to identify both explicit and implicit meaning in one of several designated core texts. Teachers are given a reading rubric to help grade answers to the constructed response section. For the short answer reading rubric, answers are scored on a scale of 0 to 4. A score of 2 reflects the 50% mastery necessary to pass the CASE. According to the rubric, in order to receive a score of 2, the student must "demonstrate an accurate but limited understanding of the text," "make simplistic interpretations," "use irrelevant and/or limited references," and "generalize without illustrating key ideas." The acceptable baseline for passing, then, has little expectation that the student will be capable of much more than a minimal basic understanding of a core text.

Taken together, these findings suggest that sample CASE exams for English I and II do not challenge teachers to emphasize interpretive and implied reasoning skills.

While there are surely portions of the sample CASE that require such thinking, it is nonetheless possible for a student to pass the English CASE with minimal utilization of these skills. In short, the CASE exam reflects the same basic proficiency level as the Program of Study.

IV. TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS: FINDINGS FROM OUR INTERVIEWS

Teachers' Responses to District Implementation of Standards and Assessments

In order to assess how teachers responded to both the pressure and support aspects of the district's curricular policy as represented by the CASE and Programs of Study, respectively, we asked English and mathematics teachers how each of these affected their curricular and instructional choices. We coded teachers' responses concerning the Programs of Study into six categories of use. *Goals and objectives* indicate that teachers used the Program of Study to establish the overall goals for each instructional unit. These statements tended to be general; teachers used the Program of Study to guide the overall goals for their courses. *Literary Work/Topic* indicate that teachers used the Program of Study to select literary works for their classes or, in math, to decide what math topics they should teach. *Sequence* refers to teachers' use of the Program to determine the order in which they taught units, works or topics. *Length* indicates that the teachers used the Program to decide how many days, weeks, etc. they spent on each unit. *Instructional Activities* refers to reports that teachers used the suggested activities listed in the Program of Study. *Instructional Approaches* refer to teachers' reports that they used the Program of Study to determine how they will actually teach the course materials. This category

should indicate that the Program of Study guided how teachers understood course content and how it should be taught.

We used a different scheme to categorize the effects of the CASE that was based on the types of responses teachers provided us. We found that most teachers felt that the CASE affected their curricular and instructional decisions in four ways. First, teachers said that it influenced the *Literary works and Topics* for study that they selected. Second, the CASE affected the *Sequence*, or order in which teachers presented works and topics throughout the semester and the school year. Third, the CASE influenced what *Skills* the teachers focused on in their classes. Finally, teachers reported that the CASE influenced their curricular and instructional decisions because they included *Test Preparation*, or lessons focused on preparing students for the format and content of the CASE.

We found, again, that teachers responded most to the pressure rather than the support components, though differences emerged across schools and subject matters. As indicated by Table 4, most English teachers (77%) reported that they made some use of the Program of Study while less than half of the math teachers (44%) did so. A higher percentage of English teachers in Schools C and D, under probation and reconstitution, respectively, reported using the Program than in Schools A and B that do not face district intervention. English teachers in Schools C and D used the Program of Study to determine goals and objectives, what works to teach, when to teach them over the course of the semester/year and how long to spend on each unit. The lowest percentage of English teachers who reported using the Program of Study were in School B. Only half of the English teachers said that they even received the Program of Study, with many of them not knowing what they were. In part, this was a result of a change in the

department chair. The chair during the study year, 1998-99, taught ESL classes rather than English classes. Being new to her role as chair, there were some problems with book orders and with dissemination of materials. The low percentage of teachers reporting that they received the Program of Study likely reflects this administrative change.

Significantly, most math teachers in all of the schools reported that they did not use the Program of Study. This was true for probation/reconstitution schools as well as non-probation schools. Math teachers, when they did use the Program of Study, made use of it to select topics rather than to determine goals and objectives or sequencing of units. Many math teachers said that the Program of Study was difficult to use. In particular, these teachers complained that the Program did not correspond with the sequence of instruction laid out in their textbooks and that, in order to implement the Program of Study they would have to "jump around" too much. In addition, many math teachers resisted the integration of algebra and geometry supported by the Program of Study.

Very few teachers in either subject in the four the schools reported that the Programs of Study informed their instructional approaches. English teachers typically said that it simply reflected what they already taught, while math teachers typically did not even refer to the document.

In contrast, a higher percentage of both math and English teachers across the schools reported that the CASE affected their curricular and instructional decisions. While 38% of the teachers reported no effects, 62% of them said that the CASE had some effects on their curricular and instructional decisions. As Table 5 indicates, teachers reported that the CASE affected what works or topics they taught, when they taught them

and that they included more specific test preparation activities than before. Overall, 23% of the teachers interviewed said that the CASE influenced the sequence of their curriculum. There was no distinct pattern of use by subject matter or school. Interviews suggest that for math teachers the effects of the CASE on sequencing were not significant. These teachers typically reported that they had to make sure they covered certain topics during each semester so students would be prepared to take the CASE. For English teachers, however, the sequencing changed how they normally approached their course material. This was particularly true for teachers teaching tenth grade American literature. Many of these teachers reported that they preferred a chronological approach to the course. However, because they had to teach *A Raisin in the Sun*, a contemporary work, in the first semester they could not maintain this chronological approach. Given the lack of district training on the standards and limited documented rationale for the sequencing of the district's English curriculum as detailed in the Program of Study, many of the teachers taught the core works discretely. Few drew connections between core works over the course of the year. One exception was in School B where teachers did begin to relate the works to one another. These teachers had students compare and contrast characters and ideas across texts. These assignments began to give a more meaningful structure to the curriculum. However, teachers developed this type of coherence as they taught and they developed it late in the school year.

Along with the modest effects of the CASE on sequencing and choice of works or topics, teachers reported that the CASE affected their curriculum in that they spent one or two weeks before the exam going over sample questions provided by the district. However, because the district only provided these sample questions two weeks prior to

the administering of the CASE, they did not assist teachers in developing curriculum and incorporating standards into their curriculum throughout the year.

Instructional practices and district standards and assessments

In order to understand teachers' responses to the pressure and support dimensions of the district's curricular policies, we interviewed the eight teachers we observed teach *To Kill a Mockingbird.* The interviews focused on the following questions: 1) How did district standards and assessments, the Programs of Study and the CASE influence their instructional practices?; 2) How did teachers explain the pressures of the CASE? and 3) Did the teachers believe that they had achieved their objectives for the unit? Our interview analysis revealed three consistent themes. *Coverage, pressure of the CASE* and *time constraints* seemed to be important factors in shaping teachers' curricular and instructional decisions, though the importance of these factors varied by school and by teacher. In what follows, we discuss these three factors.

Coverage

Teachers' reported objectives for the instructional unit were similar across schools. Six of the eight teachers said that identifying the elements of a novel was one of the main unit objectives. Three of the teachers also noted that they wanted students to understand the historical period in which the novel was set, although all mentioned the time period throughout the unit. Teachers in School B and School D explicitly addressed historical issues by incorporating activities and readings about the Depression Era into their units. Most other teachers simply made references to the Depression and an

emerging civil rights movement as these allusions came up in the book. Though teachers talked about the importance of the historical perspective, their approach to teaching this perspective was *ad hoc* and superficial. Teachers typically referred to characters throughout the novel as reflections of the social setting of the novel but did not delve into how the historical period in which the story was set and in which the author wrote the book affected the novel and, in particular, its narration.

References to identifying literary elements reflect some teachers use of the Programs of Study. The Programs of Study identifies the central objective of the unit as follows: *The students will read literature and be able to evaluate the relationships between a plot and its subplots, connecting themes, character traits, motives, tone, point of view and setting.*[12] Most teachers identified this as their key objective even though many of the teachers said that they did not refer to the Programs of Study in their unit planning. Only three of the eight teachers said that they used the Programs of Study to determine unit objectives. The importance of identifying literary elements reflects a conventional way of approaching literature that the majority of English teachers in the four schools referred to when they said that the Programs of Study reflected rather than challenged how they typically taught.

Though teachers stated the goals of teaching students to identify literary elements and to understand the novel s historical setting, the predominate objective for all of the teachers was to make sure that students read the novel and could identify the story line of the novel. Teachers talked about the importance of getting them (students) to read, of getting them to understand the facts of the novel, to just understand the plot.

Teachers said that most of the students would not read the book on their own and that in order to ensure that they at least read the book they needed to read it aloud with them.

Pressure of the CASE

Teachers placed importance on simply getting students to read the book in large part because of the CASE. One teacher in School A, the school not under district intervention, responded when asked how the CASE influenced her lessons: "I just wanted to make sure that I covered all the material, that we completed the novel, to arouse their curiosity about Boo, make sure they understood what the title meant in relation to several characters in the book." The teacher's comment reflects the concern of all of the teachers that students get through the book and, also, that they understand the major themes. For all of the teachers, identifying several of the novels' themes was a central objective that stemmed primarily from the CASE. The CASE involves an essay question that requires students to discuss one of the themes of a core work. Because teachers did not know what theme from *Mockingbird* that the CASE would focus on, teachers felt that they had to cover as many themes as they could. One teacher from School C when asked what the objectives of the unit were commented: "I tried to anticipate the CASE essay questions. Giving them a thorough understanding of the different themes of the book." Teachers typically reported that they covered from three to five different themes, including racism and prejudice, the idea of a mockingbird, poverty and class structure, empathy, coming of age, justice, and appearance versus reality. Teachers felt compelled to cover most of these themes because of the CASE. One teacher in School D said,

> "I would think most teachers who are teaching that those would be the themes that they would focus on. But the problem could come, though, because

> for example, with the *A Raisin in the Sun* CASE question, they asked on the essay section, was on a theme that was very vague and was not something I had covered and that most of the other teachers had covered. So hopefully they didn't do that.

In large part, then, the CASE both structured the curriculum for the teachers and fragmented it at the same time. Teachers selected themes based on what they thought would be on the CASE. Instead of providing conceptual coherence to the unit, however, teachers covered several themes in order to prepare students to answer the CASE questions. The pressure of the CASE and, in particular, the fact that the district provided a limited curricular rationale and modest guidance on the themes or concepts to be tested, contributed to a basic order *catalog* type of curricular structure in which teachers identified several themes without drawing connections between them.[13] Teachers' concern that all students read the entire novel and that they touch on several themes reflect teachers' concerns with the CASE. Only one teacher, from School B, amongst the eight observed said that she began to draw connections across texts and that a unifying theme had emerged from the core works over the course of the year. Tenth grade teachers in School B further focused on these connections by assigning students a research paper that had them compare and contrast Atticus from *Mockingbird* and Mama from *A Raisin in the Sun* in terms of parenting skills. This was the only case of cross-text connections that we saw being made in the four schools.

Time Constraints

Another concern associated with the CASE was the issue of time. Teachers in School C felt constrained by competing pressures that arose from the TAP and probation.

One teacher in School C said that she did not collaborate with other teachers to develop her *Mockingbird* unit because "everyone was just running around with the TAP. I didn't want to impose on them." This teacher reported that she did not assign any writing with *Mockingbird* because "I was pressured for time with the TAP and the CASE. I had to cram in as many details as possible about the novel." The other teacher observed in School C, and the special education teacher who worked with him and taught much of the *Mockingbird* unit, also noted that the school's emphasis on the TAP and its relation to probation affected how they taught the novel. These teachers initially had planned to have students read the screenplay rather than the novel because the majority of the second semester had been spent preparing students for the TAP test. These competing pressures led these teachers to assign students to read the majority of the novel at home and then to have students read the screenplay along with watching the movie rather than completing the novel. The head teacher explains his decision:

> "I decided to read the screenplay because of time constraints. I decided to make the last two novel tests Mockingbird. Time constraints with the TAP. I ended up having only three weeks before the CASE...Time. What it was we were just concerned about time constraints. Basically we're teaching reading for the TAP. You've got two things tugging at you. You've got time constraints you have to deal with."

The special education teacher who taught with him noted, "We are not going to sacrifice the TAP for the CASE."

Interestingly, the teachers in School D, the school under reconstitution, did not mention time constraints like their counterparts in School C. School D was, however, the only other school to use the screenplay. Teachers said that this was not a conscious decision like in School C, but that it was the result of an ordering mistake. However, the

teachers chose to teach the screenplay. For the sanctioned schools, the screenplay served both as a way to engage students through oral reading as well as through a simplified plot.

Conclusion

Teachers in our study clearly felt constrained by the pressures of the CAS and the CASE. The standards and assessments served in large measure to regulate curriculum planning and instructional choices--particularly for English teachers. Teachers felt the pressures of coverage, pressure from the CASE, and time constraints. Teachers in all schools discussed how they would have made different curricular and instructional decisions if not for district pressures driven by the mandated assessments. In the following section, we discuss the impact that the CAS and CASE have had on the nature and type of instruction.

V. TEACHERS INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Along with interviewing teachers about their curricular and instructional decisions, we also observed each of the eight teachers teach the novel. We analyzed these classroom observations in several ways. Our goal in these analyses was to break down classroom instruction to different levels to identify the content and nature of teachers decisions. In addition, we wanted to see how these decisions affected the kinds of instruction and learning opportunities occurring in these classrooms.

First, we focused on teachers instructional decisions. Toward this goal we examined teachers decisions regarding allocation of instructional time and categorized

types of written assignments. Second, we looked more closely at representative samples of teacher-led discussions, what we call recitations, in order to understand the nature of classroom instructional interactions. To begin with, we identified the questions teachers asked students about the novel and analyzed them using a taxonomy of reading skills. Then, using this same taxonomy, we reversed the analysis looking at the questions students asked teachers. We also use the taxonomy to analyze teachers□written assignments. Third, we focused on the dynamic between teachers and students, looking at the dialogue initiated by higher-level teacher questions. In this analysis, we wanted to understand not only how teachers prompted students to answer complex questions, but also the nature of student response to these questions.

Time Allocation and Instructional Activities

Table 6 indicates the percentage of classroom time teachers allocated to 13 different types of activities. Classroom transcripts were coded according to the length of each episode or activity and the type of activity involved. Using Hillock□s coding scheme, we considered an episode to be a □chunk□of time that lasted at least two minutes and that was bounded by changes in materials, classroom arrangements and/or instructional objectives.[14] Table 7 indicates how we classified activities.

Along with management activities, teachers allocated most of the instructional time observed to four types of activities: recitation, seatwork, reading aloud and watching movies and/or listening to tapes of the novel being read aloud. On average, the teachers spent 23% of the observed time on recitation, 15% on seatwork, 14% on reading aloud

and 10% on watching the movie or listening to an audio-tape of the novel being read aloud. These activities accounted for 78% of classroom time.

Though there are many similarities across classes, there are differences by school. Teachers in Schools C and D, those under probation and reconstitution, respectively, spent more time on recitation and less time on reading aloud than teachers in School A and B. One would expect the opposite given the threat of further district intervention that loomed over teachers in Schools C and D. Teachers in these schools should feel more compelled to make sure that students read the novel for the CASE. However, the fact that these teachers spent more time on recitation meant that they spent more time explicating the novel for students. One teacher in School C spent almost the entire unit going over a study guide packet for the novel. Students graded each others packets as the teachers went over each question and the correct answer that was projected on an overhead at the front of the class. Teachers in School D frequently interrupted students reading aloud to explain what was happening in the novel, to define problem vocabulary, and to quiz students on the story line or plot. Teachers allocation of time across the schools thus reflects the centrality of their stated objective of students getting the facts of the story and getting down the plot.

In addition to CASE curriculum, teachers continued to prepare students for the TAP exam. Table 8 indicates the amount of time teachers allocated to standardized test preparation during the *Mockingbird* unit. We classified activities as standardized test preparation that engaged students in taking and reviewing sample tests. We also included activities mandated by the schools with the specific goal of raising students test scores. For example, Teacher 7 in School B began every period with a Daily Oral Language drill,

a grammar exercise that the school mandated that teachers included in their lessons. Not surprisingly, teachers in Schools C and D, the schools under probation and reconstitution, respectively, allocated the highest percentage of observed instructional time to test preparation activities. On average, the teachers in School C spent 20% of the time on such activities, while teachers in School D spent 37% of their time. The amount of time teachers spent on test preparation within as well as across the two schools, however, varies significantly. The difference in time allocation between teachers in School D reflects, in part, the fact that Teacher 7 taught a regular level tenth grade class, while Teacher 8 taught a class intended for college bound tenth grade students.

Significantly, no time was spent on engaging students in discussion. While recitation follows a pattern in which teachers ask a closed-ended question, students respond and teachers evaluate the response, discussion entails students and teachers constructing interpretations of literature in dialogue with one another. Discussions are marked by open-ended questions and exchanges amongst students, as well as between students and the teacher.[15] The fact that no discussion occurred reinforces the teachers emphasis on students literal understanding of the novel. The lack of discussion is not, however, confined to the Chicago Public Schools. Several surveys of English instruction in schools nationwide indicate that recitation dominates instructional time and that teachers spend almost no time engaging students in discussion.[16]

Analysis of Recitations--Taxonomy

While the predominance of recitation, seatwork and reading aloud suggests that teachers focused their instruction on the literal level, the analysis of time allocation does

not preclude the possibility that teachers could be asking interpretive or higher order questions. In order to assess the level at which teachers aimed instruction, we analyzed three recitations led by each teacher. We only included recitations that lasted at least 5 minutes. This meant that one teacher in School A only had one recitation. We selected recitations that occurred during the beginning, the middle and the end of the instructional unit, when possible. We hypothesized that teachers would ask more interpretive questions towards the end of the unit as students had become more familiar with the basic plot and details of the novel. We categorized questions using Hillocks and Ludlow's taxonomy of literary questions.[17] We added four other types of questions that occurred frequently within our sample recitations. These are: 1) *Literary Terms* are questions that ask students to define or identify literary terms, such as hyperbole, simile, etc; 2) *General Knowledge Questions* that ask students to draw on commonly known facts about people, events or objects; 3) *Vocabulary Questions* that ask students to define specific words from the text, and 4) *Personal Opinion Questions* that asked students to give their own opinion about an event or character in the novel. These typically do not ask students to provide supporting details or elaboration.

Table 9 describes what each type of question entails. After coding teacher questions, we grouped the questions into three broader categories: 1) *Literal (L)* questions that focus on the basic information stated in the text. These include Basic Stated Information, Key Detail and Stated Relationship questions; 2) *Simple Inferential (SI)* questions require readers to make a generalization by connecting typically two pieces of information found in close proximity within a literary work. These include Simple Implied Relationship questions; 3) *Complex Inferential (CI)* questions that require readers

to connect several pieces of information across a literary text(s) to make conclusions and generalizations. These include Complex Implied Relationship, Authors Generalization and Structural questions. We grouped Literary Terms, General Knowledge, Vocabulary, and Personal Opinion into the Other category.

Our analysis of recitations shows that teachers focused primarily on the literal level. Table 10 indicates that the overwhelming majority of questions teachers asked can be categorized as Literal. Questions asked at the end of the unit did not differ much from those asked at the beginning and middle of the unit. Teachers asked only a few Complex Inferential questions, typically at the middle or end of the unit. When teachers asked these questions three responses typically occurred; students offered partial answers while the teacher answered the question, no response was made, or the teacher indicated that the right answer was actually a lower-level, typically Simple Implied or Stated Relationship answer. Frequently, teachers asked what appeared to be Author s Generalization questions. These questions typically took the form of What is one theme of the book? The notion of theme suggests that teachers wanted students to identify what the author was saying about an important concept or idea in the novel. However, students responded by giving one or two word answers, such as racism, or growing up. Teachers accepted these answers as sufficient and seldom asked for or provided elaborations. We coded these questions as Simple Implied Relationships because the teacher did not seem to expect elaboration and thus reduced the complexity of the answer. In order to explain an Author s Generalization one would have to elaborate on what the author is saying about racism or about growing up. Simply saying

that these are important does require the student to make some implicit generalizations but it does not require the student to provide a meaningful interpretation of the work.

On the whole, then, teachers' questions indicate the importance teachers placed on getting students to identify the "facts of the book." Teachers seldom asked students to make complex inferences about the characters or relationships in the novel, nor did they ask students to make elaborated generalizations about the novel's themes.

Our analysis of both the types of teachers' written assignments and the types of questions asked reflects the same focus on plot mastery. A little over half of the teachers' written assignments took the form of worksheets with true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. The remaining written assignments took the form of writing exercises, vocabulary exercises, and tests or quizzes. We found that 65% of the questions on the written assignments were literal, and a third were inferential. Table 11 indicates the classroom assignments by type. Table 12 illustrates the types of questions on written assignments.

Teacher-Student Interactions

What is the experience of students in the CASE classroom? We examined this question in two ways. First, we looked at student questions using the same taxonomy used with teacher questions. Second, we focused on the dialogue segments proceeding inferential questions. Our objective here was twofold. First, based on our earlier findings that teachers devoted the majority of their instructional time to literal comprehension, we wanted to know if we could discern from the data if teachers were reacting to the sense that this was the level of student knowledge. We believed that by

looking at student questions, we could gauge, to a certain degree, the level of student engagement. Second, we wanted to understand how teachers negotiated inferential questions. What kinds of answers did they consider adequate? Did they model the type of answers they expected?

Taxonomy of Student Questions

In order to assess the kinds of questions students asked, we coded student questions into five categories based on Hillock's taxonomy and our additional categories. *Literal* questions and *inferential* questions retain their earlier definitions. In addition, we added *procedural* questions and *off-task questions.* We classified *procedural* questions as those in which students asked about the nature of the classroom activity, such as: What question are we on? What are the directions? We classified questions as *off-task* when students changed the subject or discussed something unrelated to the topic initiated by the teacher.

In the classrooms we observed, we were surprised to find that just over half of students' questions focused on procedural type questions. Table 13 shows the types of student questions across instructional units. While we did observe a large degree of variation between teachers' certain activities generated more procedural questions than others' except for one teacher, this variation was between 40 and 75%. (While we found this surprising, it is not within the scope of this report to account for this.) After procedural questions, one-fourth of the questions students asked were literal. Eleven percent were inferential. In other words, approximately a third of all questions were substantive questions about the text.

Teacher prompting

The type of student engagement in the classroom, however, is often a reflection of the goals of the individual teacher. Teachers demonstrate their expectations from students by encouraging or modeling certain responses. Students learn by example as well as through prompting. In an effort to understand the dynamic between teachers and students, and specifically how teachers negotiated inferential questions in our CASE study classrooms, we developed an approach that we felt would elucidate this issue. First, we identified the full instructional moment following an inferential question. An instructional moment began when the question was asked and ended when the topic of conversation moved to another topic. Then we categorized the types of questions or *prompts* teachers asked. *Individual prompts* occurred when a teacher asked an individual student to follow up on a previous statement. *Whole class prompts* occurred when the teacher directed a follow-up question to the entire class. We also looked at the kind of answers teachers provided for students and students provided for teachers. We categorized these as *simple statements*, when teachers or students gave an answer that was either one word or a sentence, or as *substantiated statements*, when they provided an answer that was supported with evidence from the text. In our estimation, when teachers and especially students made substantiated statements, they demonstrated knowledge of the novel as well as the ability to apply direct evidence to a statement. This represented a more complex response than one when students show they know the answer but fail to develop it. It is important to clarify that by definition, an inferential question is complex, thus necessitating an elaborated response to be answered in full. We present our findings through two different lenses. Tables 14 and 15 provide a summary analysis of

instructional moments following simple and complex inferential-type questions. Tables 16 and 17 look at this same data on a teacher-by-teacher basis.

In our analysis of instructional moments, we found that there was not a lot of variety among the various teachers in our study. Teachers rarely abandoned an inferential question after one student answer. Rather, teachers tended to persist on the question until they felt that the question had been fully explored. Of teacher prompts, the majority focused on having an individual student clarify his or her simple answer. However, the teachers did prompt the entire class a third of the time. We also found teachers did model substantiated statements with fifty percent of their statements substantiated. In addition, our instructional moments tended to follow a similar pattern. First, the teacher would ask the inferential question. Then students would provide their responses. When the students did not provide the answer expected, the teacher would prompt either an individual student or the entire class. Finally, once satisfied that the answer had been fully explored, the teacher would conclude the instructional moment by providing the full answer she had wanted. While often this was a summary of what students had contributed, for teachers it served the purpose of relaying to students the answer to the question. We observed this pattern over and over again. In none of our analyses did we find a student providing this summary.

What does our analysis of student contributions reveal about why teachers ultimately provided the answer to the question themselves? In our sample instructional moments, student only substantiated their statements 13% of the time. Teachers, while modeling the kinds of responses they wanted, did not expect this type of response from their students. As a result, teachers felt compelled to do much of the work themselves.

This leads us to conclude that teachers could be pressing students more, being more explicit in having students substantiate answers. Our findings indicate that while teachers may be engaging in substantiation, they are not explicitly encouraging students to do so. This finding is encouraging as it indicates that teachers are conveying complex ideas to students. At the same time, however, it indicates that teachers need to prompt students to generate more of the complex answers themselves.

Conclusion

Efforts to implement standards-based instruction and assessments are typically associated with two goals: accountability and improving instruction. In this study, we found that teachers responded primarily to the accountability dimension of the district's curricular policies rather than to the instructional improvement aspect. Teachers reported that the district's assessment, the CASE, did influence their curricular and instructional decisions. The main effect of the CASE was on sequencing of topics or works. In English, teachers reported that the CASE made it impossible to use a chronological approach to teaching American Literature. This did, then, result in altering the structure of the English curriculum. Rather than providing a thematic or conceptual structure, however, the lack of an explicit district rationale for the sequence of works implied by the CASE, resulted in fragmenting the curriculum. Some teachers did draw out common themes across the core works, but these were done on an individual or school-wide basis rather than on a district-wide basis. Further, these connections were made late in the school year. Any coherence teachers created was, then, *ad hoc* rather than planned.

The CASE also affected the sequence of math instruction, though not as significantly. Math teachers reported that they made sure they covered the topics that would be on each semester's CASE. Math teachers did not have to reconceptualize their curriculum. Interestingly, the Program of Study for math did attempt such a reconceptualization by integrating geometry and algebra. Teachers felt that this required them to "jump around" too much within their textbooks. In response, few math teachers said they used the Program of Study, the district's primary support mechanism, to design their curriculum.

English teachers in the sample schools tended to use the Programs of Study more than math teachers. English teachers used the Program to identify objectives, core works, and sequence. However, it is doubtful that this actually changed how they taught. The overwhelming number of English teachers said that the Programs of Study had no effect on their instruction. Many teachers said that it simply reflected what they had been doing for years.

Teachers' responses to the accountability rather than instructional aspect of the district's policy were due, in large part, to the way in which the district itself implemented the policy. During the early phase of policy implementation, the district provided few supports to teachers or schools. Very few teachers in the four schools reported attending district training on the rationale of the standards and assessments, and on the instructional theory that lies behind them. Further, a close analysis of the supportive materials the district did provide English teachers suggests that the primary intent of the standards and assessments was to standardize rather than improve instruction. The English Program of Study represents a conventional view of English

instruction focused on the different types of writing and on identification of the various elements of each type. Though the district's standards include mention of historical and cultural perspectives and language associated with constructivist teaching, the Programs of Study contains few references to such perspectives, stressing instead a lower order type of literary analysis focused on identifying literary elements.

Our analysis of how teachers taught one of the district's mandated core works, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, indicates again how the teachers responded more to the accountability rather than instructional aspects of the district's curricular policy. The primary goal of the unit was to cover the novel. Teachers wanted to make sure that students read the novel and that they could identify the plot, characters and many of the novel's themes. The importance of these goals is reflected in the teacher interviews and in the classroom observations. Teachers' questions focused on the basic information of the novel. Even when teachers asked apparently more interpretive questions about the novel's theme, the accepted answers were typically one or two word phrases. In essence, teachers viewed the themes as just one more 'fact' of the novel, not ideas or concepts to be constructed through reading and discussing the novel. This idea of what constitutes a theme reflects efforts to cover the novel and to make sure that students were prepared to take the CASE. Again, the teachers are responding to the accountability aspect of the district's curricular policy. The CASE becomes the driving force behind the district's curricular policy. Teachers repeatedly said that they focused on the themes that they thought would be on the CASE. Because teachers felt that they needed to touch on as many themes as they could, the district's policy reinforces, if not results in, a fragmentary or *catalog* approach to curriculum.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Findings and Policy Recommendations

Overall, our four-school study reveals the challenge of improving instruction system-wide in urban districts such as Chicago. Our study highlights these difficulties as it examines the early implementation of Chicago's standards and assessments. The fact that we found little significant changes in teachers' instructional practices reflects both the early implementation stage and the challenges of system-wide instructional change. Though our study lacks a baseline by which to compare teachers' curricular and instructional practices, teachers report that they have not changed their instruction in response to the standards and assessments. The few changes that occurred were not significant; teachers report that they re-sequenced some topics and that they took time out of the curriculum to prepare students for the district assessment through the use of sample questions and tests. Our analysis of the district documents intended to support teachers' efforts to teach to the standards suggests that the Programs of Study has placed primary emphasis on basic competency. The English Program of Study tends to reduce the complexity of the district's standards and supports a conventional, basic literal-oriented instruction. Since we focus here primarily on English instruction, we see a need for more research on how teachers in other subject matter responded to the standards.

While efforts to implement standards and assessments are often assumed to be attempts to improve instruction, our study suggests that in the short-run urban districts may be more successful in using these tools to standardize curriculum. Improving instruction, however, is a longer-term challenge and is likely to require other policy

support mechanisms at the district level. Our study indicates the need to consider how a district balances the accountability and instructional dimensions of standards and assessments and the nature of the support the district provides teachers. Further, we need to consider the nature of the standards and assessments themselves. Having standards says very little about the quality of the standards or about their various uses. Finally, Chicago's standards-based efforts need to be considered within the context of the nature of the challenge in improving urban high schools. Clearly, the standards provide a base line or minimum level of instructional quality in a system with a high number of lower performing high schools. Further research is needed to develop a more systematic understanding of how district-wide standards and assessments are shaping instructional and curricular practices in low performing high schools. Standards and assessments constitute an important first step, albeit inadequate as a self-contained strategy, toward instructional improvement in large urban systems.

This study also suggests that system-wide standards and assessments have had some impact on regulating teachers' curricular and instructional choices. The district is to be commended for developing a content-based exam. But while the district may be seeing improvement in test scores, greater effort is required to improve teachers' curricular decisions and instructional interactions with students. While some of this uniformity may change as teachers are given the discretion to choose the core novel, as expected in the 2000-2001 CASE, it still does not address the teachers' overall concerns regarding coverage, pressure, and time, as they prepare students for the assessment. The district needs to decide if the CASE is intended as a test to set basic proficiency levels, or as a lever for improving student achievement. The district, in conjunction with school

administrators and teachers, needs to work to provide instruction appropriate for the student population at each particular school site.

Balancing Regulation, Support, and Professional Discretion

Over the last four years, the district's educational agenda has centered on the use of regulation, support, and personal discretion. A key challenge for the district has been to strike a balance between these different policies. Through the CAS and the CASE, the district has provided teachers with clear regulation. At the same time, our study suggests that the district could provide more support for teachers. Perhaps it is as a consequence of the district's effort to allow for professional discretion that they have provided very little professional development linked to the CAS or the CASE. Nor have they shifted such professional development expectations to the school level. We suggest that the district work with schools to provide targeted instructional support to teachers in order to offer them a greater repertoire of activities to turn to as they prepare students for district-wide exams.

Indeed, our study has shown that by and large teachers have the skills necessary to move towards a higher level of instruction. The teachers in our study are prepared, have a strong understanding of the core works they teach, and are working hard to prepare their students for the CASE. The question that remains is how teachers can be supported to make better decisions in their classrooms. For example, how can teachers raise their level of questioning so that students are more challenged by inferential questions? How do we get students to be more engaged in the material? The district needs to think of strategies to add to the existing capacities of its teachers. Possible

support mechanisms might include initiatives ranging from sustained professional development at the district's newly established National Teachers Academy to a wider array of resources for teachers posted on the Chicago Public Schools website.

In addition, the district needs to decide whether its standards and assessments are meant to serve a basic proficiency purpose or should serve as levers to improve the quality of instruction. This study suggests that thus far the district has focused primarily on the former agenda. We believe the district should be more ambitious in its instructional agenda. Higher-order learning skills and constructivist approaches to teaching are clearly imbedded in the CAS. They are, however, far less evident in the Programs of Study and the CASE. By re-calibrating the Programs of Study and the CASE to ensure that higher-level skills are not displaced in the funneling process, teachers would be challenged to pursue the more innovative as well as the more traditional aspects to the Chicago standards and assessments.

As currently structured, district support does not account for variation between schools and within schools. Given the wide range of abilities of students in the CPS, each individual school needs to assess how the standards and assessments can be used best with their students. Instruction in International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement classes, for example, should be different than instruction for students struggling with basic literacy. At this point, there are no mechanisms in place to help teachers assess what is appropriate for their students and as a consequence they appear to be making very similar instructional decisions. While these are clearly school-level challenges, the district needs to provide support to schools to facilitate this processes.

The Role of School-level Support

Our findings indicate that teachers develop an instructional approach based on their assessment of what will be tested on the district-wide CASE. This process occurs with little direct support from either the district or individual schools. Our study suggests that there are school-level mechanisms that could better assist teachers in their preparation of students for the CASE. We believe that subject matter departments are currently underutilized in just such a role. The subject matter field plays a role in shaping teachers' attitudes about the technology of teaching, as well as providing a rationale for what material should be presented as well as appropriate instructional activities. Subject matter departments also determine teachers' networks within the school, shaping, in large part, their support systems as well as their collegial interactions.[18] Departments promote professional exchange, help teachers in their decision-making processes, and enhance teachers' knowledge of their subject matter. In short, they shape teachers' common norms of practice. And yet our study found that teachers often did not turn to their departments for help other than in deciding which book to teach. We suggest that each school examine the role of its department in supporting teachers as they prepare for the CASE. In addition, we recommend that departments become more involved in monitoring instruction. This does not need to be an evaluative process, and indeed under current regulations only the principal and assistant principal can evaluate teachers. Rather, the department needs to be organized around good practices and needs to foster an environment of support for its teachers. With the standards and assessments organized by subject matter, it seems natural to expect departments to provide support to teachers.

Second, schools should work to strengthen professional networks within and beyond the school. Teachers across subject matters share students and instructional techniques. Drawing on the strengths of the school faculty, the school can highlight teachers' individual talents, especially when colleagues are asked to participate in professional development.

Linkages to Higher Education Institutions

If the CAS, the POS and the CASE are the primary entities structuring curriculum and instruction in the Chicago Public Schools, then pre-service teachers should be well-versed in these documents before they begin formal instruction. To achieve this, the district should improve linkages with local teacher preparation programs to ensure that they prepare their students for district expectations. In particular, pre-service teachers need to be exposed to the district's standards and assessments which serve as the basis for all subsequent academic goals. Teachers who arrive well-versed in the wide-ranging goals of the CAS will be better equipped to find ways to implement these goals in their curricular and instructional expectations.

Local universities can also be called upon to help provide more support to teachers in the form of professional development. This might involve offering teachers the opportunity to audit graduate-level courses in history, math and literature that would enhance teachers' knowledge base, as well as enabling an on-going connection between secondary and post-secondary level learning. To our knowledge, local universities have not been called on to assist in this capacity.

To conclude, our intention in this report was to provide a multi-level analysis of the implementation of the district's standards, Programs of Study, and CASE exam. Our findings suggest that the district has succeeded in regulating teachers' work and structuring the curriculum across schools. While teachers are prepared and have a strong foundation, the district still faces challenges. Our report suggests that several issues need further consideration. First, the district needs to decide if its standards and assessments are intended to serve a basic proficiency purpose or if they are to raise the instructional bar. If its goal is to raise performance, the district needs to provide greater support to schools and teachers in the form of professional development and instructional support. Teachers need to be helped both in developing strategies to motivate students and in assessing their students' instructional needs. They also need to be encouraged to spend more class time teaching students to respond effectively to inferential-type questions.

Further, several organizational supports can be strengthened. First, the district can work with schools to expand the role of the subject matter department. Second, collegial networks within schools should be strengthened. Finally, the district may turn to local universities for support in both the pre-service and professional development arenas.

As standards and assessments reconfigure the work of teachers, ongoing research is needed to assess the quality and effectiveness of the support given to teachers by the district and schools. In addition, more research needs to be done on the effect of across-the-board standardization. If teachers are not meeting their diverse student needs and are instead making sure that basic proficiency is met, new policy mechanisms must be

designed to provide a proper balance between curriculum standards and differential academic needs.

	Probation/Reconstitution	Academic Promotion	Academies	Curriculum Standards & Assessments
Direction				
Regulation	Threat of Restaffing	Grade Retention	Certificate of Mastery; CASE promotion requirement	Use CASE to identify low-performing schools for district intervention
Support	External Partners, Probation Managers	Summer Bridge Program, Developmental Math & Reading Courses; Structured Curriculum	Funds for Common Teacher, Planning Time; Textbooks, Science Labs, Academy Resource Teacher;	Curricular Frameworks, Programs of Study, Structured Curriculum, Sample exams and questions, Staff Development
Professional Discretion	Principal Selection of External Partners; Teacher Instructional & Curricular Choice	Promotion Waivers; Hiring Teachers for Summer Bridge Program; Teacher Instructional Choice	School Choice of Organizational Model	Teachers' Instructional Choice

School	Enrollment, 1997-98	% Racial and Ethnic Minority, 1997-98	% LEP	% Low-income	% of students at national norm on TAP Reading, 1997-98	% of students at national norm on TAP Reading, 1998-99	% change from 97-98 to 98-99	% of students at national norm on TAP Math, 1997-98	% of students at national norm on TAP Math, 1998-99	% change from 97-98 to 98-99
A	1948	99.5	0	77.6	33.9	36.2	2.3	39.7	46.6	6.9
B	1712	75	33.2	97	28.1	26.9	-1.2	32.9	37.7	4.8
C	2094	92	30	78	11.9	19.6	7.7	27.6	41.8	14.2
D	1332	100	0	87.7	5.5	11.4	5.9	9.6	21	11.4

DATA SOURCE: CPS website, www.cps.k12.il.us.edu

School	Subject	No Support	Some Support	Type of Support* Sample Exam & Questions	Program of Study	Staff Development
A	English (N=11)	0.0%	100.0%	55.0%	100.0%	9.0%
	Math (N=9)	0.0%	100.0%	56.0%	67.0%	11.0%
	Total	*0.0%*	*100.0%*	*55.0%*	*95.0%*	*10.0%*
B	English (N=10)	10.0%	90.0%	50.0%	70.0%	10.0%
	Math (N=12)	0.0%	100.0%	67.0%	50.0%	0.0%
	Total	*5.0%*	*95.0%*	*59.0%*	*59.0%*	*5.0%*
C	English (N=7)	0.0%	100.0%	43.0%	100.0%	0.0%
	Math (N=6)	0.0%	100.0%	89.0%	100.0%	11.0%
	Total	*0.0%*	*100.0%*	*69.0%*	*100.0%*	*6.0%*
D	English (N=7)	0.0%	100.0%	43.0%	100.0%	0.0%
	Math (N=6)	0.0%	100.0%	67.0%	83.0%	0.0%
	Total	*0.0%*	*100.0%*	*54.0%*	*92.0%*	*0.0%*
Total	English (N=35)	3.0%	97.0%	49.0%	89.0%	6.0%
	Math (N=36)	0.0%	100.0%	69.0%	78.0%	3.0%
All Teachers	(N=71)	1.0%	99.0%	59.0%	83.0%	4.0%

* NOTE: **Sample exam & questions:** Teachers report receiving sample CASE questions and practice exams from the Central Office; Programs of Study: Teachers report having individual copy of Program of Study for courses; **Staff development:** Teachers report attending Central Office provided in-services directly concerned with CASE exam or Programs of Study

School	Subject	No Use	Some Use	Type of Use: Goals & Objectives	Lit. Works, Topics	Sequence	Length of Instruct Units	Instructional Activities	Instructional Approaches
A	English (N=11)	27.0%	73.0%	45.0%	55.0%	9.0%	9.0%	9.0%	9.0%
	Math (N=9)	44.0%	56.0%	22.0%	33.0%	0.0%	0.0%	22.0%	0.0%
	Total	*35.0%*	*65.0%*	*35.0%*	*45.0%*	*5.0%*	*5.0%*	*15.0%*	*5.0%*
B	English (N=10)	50.0%	50.0%	10.0%	30.0%	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Math (N=12)	67.0%	33.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Total	*59.0%*	*41.0%*	*18.0%*	*27.0%*	*5.0%*	*5.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
C	English (N=7)	0.0%	100.0%	71.0%	71.0%	43.0%	43.0%	14.0%	0.0%
	Math (N=9)	44.0%	56.0%	22.0%	56.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Total	*25.0%*	*75.0%*	*44.0%*	*63.0%*	*19.0%*	*19.0%*	*6.0%*	*0.0%*
D	English (N=7)	0.0%	100.0%	71.0%	86.0%	57.0%	43.0%	0.0%	14.0%
	Math (N=6)	67.0%	33.0%	17.0%	33.0%	17.0%	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Total	*31.0%*	*69.0%*	*46.0%*	*15.0%*	*8.0%*	*8.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
Total	English (N=35)	23.0%	77.0%	46.0%	57.0%	26.0%	23.0%	6.0%	6.0%
	Math (N=36)	56.0%	44.0%	22.0%	36.0%	3.0%	3.0%	6.0%	0.0%
All Teachers	(N=71)	39.0%	61.0%	34.0%	46.0%	14.0%	13.0%	6.0%	3.0%

School	Subject	No Effects	Some Effects	Lit. Works, Topics	Sequence	Skills	Test Preparation
A	English (N=11)	55.0%	45.0%	36.0%	9.0%	9.0%	18.0%
	Math (N=9)	33.0%	67.0%	22.0%	22.0%	0.0%	22.0%
	Total	*45.0%*	*55.0%*	*30.0%*	*15.0%*	*5.0%*	*20.0%*
B	English (N=10)	10.0%	90.0%	40.0%	40.0%	10.0%	10.0%
	Math (N=12)	50.0%	50.0%	25.0%	33.0%	0.0%	8.0%
	Total	*32.0%*	*68.0%*	*32.0%*	*36.0%*	*5.0%*	*9.0%*
C	English (N=7)	29.0%	71.0%	14.0%	43.0%	14.0%	0.0%
	Math (N=9)	67.0%	33.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	22.0%
	Total	*50.0%*	*50.0%*	*6.0%*	*19.0%*	*13.0%*	*13.0%*
D	English (N=7)	14.0%	86.0%	57.0%	14.0%	0.0%	14.0%
	Math (N=6)	33.0%	67.0%	17.0%	17.0%	0.0%	33.0%
	Total	*23.0%*	*77.0%*	*38.0%*	*15.0%*	*0.0%*	*23.0%*
Total	(N= 71)	38.0%	62.0%	27.0%	23.0%	6.0%	15.0%

School	Teacher	Minutes Spent on Standardized Test Preparation	Number of Minutes Observed	Percent of Time Spent on Standardized Test Preparation
A	1	0	539	0.0%
	2	0	367	0.0%
	Total	*0*	*906*	*0.0%*
B	3	0	434	0.0%
	4	50	383	13.0%
	Total	*50*	*817*	*6.0%*
C	5	50	376	13.0%
	6	91	346	26.0%
	Total	*141*	*722*	*20.0%*
D	7	414	752	55.0%
	8	39	485	8.0%
	Total	*453*	*1237*	*37.0%*
Total	8	644	3682	17.0%

School	Teacher	Management	Discussion Groups	Student Report	Recitation	Lecture	Seatwork	Reading Aloud	Silent Reading	Movie/ Audio	Test	Stand. Test	Diversion
A	1	11.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	37.0%	17.0%	0.0%	13.0%	12.0%	0.0%	2.0%
	2	23.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.0%	1.0%	10.0%	32.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	0.0%	8.0%
	Total	*16.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*11.0%*	*0.0%*	*26.0%*	*23.0%*	*0.0%*	*8.0%*	*11.0%*	*0.0%*	*4.0%*
B	3	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.0%	3.0%	0.0%	35.0%	7.0%	6.0%	15.0%	0.0%	2.0%
	4	20.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	23.0%	0.0%	16.0%	21.0%	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%	11.0%	1.0%
	Total	*18.0%*	*0.0%*	*2.0%*	*0.0%*	*18.0%*	*2.0%*	*8.0%*	*29.0%*	*6.0%*	*3.0%*	*9.0%*	*5.0%*	*1.0%*
C	5	10.0%	0.0%	13.0%	0.0%	35.0%	1.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	38.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	6	22.0%	0.0%	11.0%	3.0%	26.0%	0.0%	8.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	16.0%	1.0%
	Total	*16.0%*	*0.0%*	*12.0%*	*1.0%*	*31.0%*	*0.0%*	*6.0%*	*2.0%*	*0.0%*	*20.0%*	*3.0%*	*8.0%*	*1.0%*
D	7	16.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	3.0%	25.0%	8.0%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%
	8	9.0%	0.0%	11.0%	0.0%	17.0%	2.0%	7.0%	3.0%	1.0%	30.0%	17.0%	0.0%	2.0%
	Total	*13.0%*	*0.0%*	*4.0%*	*0.0%*	*31.0%*	*3.0%*	*18.0%*	*6.0%*	*1.0%*	*12.0%*	*8.0%*	*0.0%*	*3.0%*
Total		**16.0%**	**0.0%**	**4.0%**	**0.0%**	**23.0%**	**1.0%**	**15.0%**	**14.0%**	**2.0%**	**10.0%**	**8.0%**	**3.0%**	**2.0%**

Management
During management episodes teachers discuss issues relevant to the running of the classroom and/or a specific activity. Management activities include teachers giving instructions, talking about students' grades, the class agenda for the day or for future days, placing students into small groups, disciplinary issues, and taking attendance and record-keeping.

Discussion
Discussion involves students elaborating upon ideas or interpretations of an individual text, across texts, or between texts and the larger world. It has two distinguishing features: up-take and authentic questions. Up-take occurs when teachers incorporate student responses into subsequent questions, and when teachers and students elaborate upon student ideas and responses. Authentic questions do not have pre-specified answers. They are open-ended questions that students have to provide evidence or support to answer. Both uptake and authentic questions have to be present at the same time for talk to be considered discussion.

Groups
Students work with one or more other students to engage in and/or complete an activity. We did not distinguish between cooperative learning and collaborative seatwork.

Student Report
Students present material, including their own writing, to the class.

Recitation
Recitation typically involves a pattern of the teacher asking a question, students providing a response, and the teacher either evaluating the response or simply taking the response and moving on to the next topic. Recitation is marked by questions that the teacher believes have a right or wrong answer. Recitation is also marked by teachers moving from one topic to another, or from one question to another question unconnected to the previous question.

Lecture
Teachers provide students with information or explain something without student comment.

Seatwork
Students work independently, typically with a worksheet.

Reading Aloud
The teacher reads aloud to students, students read aloud in turns or parts, and students read aloud in small groups.

Silent Reading
Students read assigned work by themselves.

Movie / Audio
Students watch a movie or videotape, or they read as they listen to an audio taped version of a literary work.

Test
Students take teacher-created quiz or test in class

Standardized Test
Students take practice tests that simulate the content or format of standardized tests.

Diversion
This includes time spent discussing issues not relevant to understanding the course content, time when a teacher is not in the room, and time when nothing instructional or management-oriented is occurring.

Basic State Information
These questions ask students to identify information that is directly stated in a literary work. Hillocks and Ludlow (1984) define these questions as □basic□because they have to do with conditions of central importance to a story. Many of the questions teachers asked in our sample were not basic in this sense. We coded them as Basic Stated Information because this is the lowest category of questions included in Hillocks□ taxonomy.

Key Detail
These questions focus on information that is crucial to the plot. Key details typically occur at important junctures of the plot and have some causal relationship to what happens.

Stated Relationship
These questions require the reader to identify the relationship that exists between two or more pieces of information. The relationship is stated in the text, typically in the form of a □because□statement.

Simple Implied Relationship
These questions require the reader to make an inference about a relationship within a literary work by drawing on two or more pieces of information closely located within the work.

Complex Implied Relationship
These questions require readers to make inferences based on several pieces of information located across a literary work. They involve a large number of details that must be dealt with together.

Author□s Generalization
This type of question asks readers to identify and elaborate upon an author□s view of the human condition. They differ from complex implied relationship questions because they require the reader to go beyond a specific relationship within a literary work to make a proposition about what that relationship implies about human nature as it exists outside of the literary work.

Structural Generalization
These questions require the reader to explain how parts of a literary work operate together to create certain effects. To answer these questions, the reader must first generalize about the arrangement of certain parts of a work and then explain how these parts work together to create an effect.

Source: Hillocks, G. and Ludlow, L. (1984). A taxonomy of skills in reading and interpreting fiction. *American Educational Research Journal*, 21:1, pp. 7-24.

School	Teacher		L	SI	CI	O	Total
A	1	N	35	2	0	2	39
		Percent %	90	5	0	5	100
A	2	N	21	2	2	0	25
		Percent %	84	8	8	0	100
B	3	N	51	2	0	0	53
		Percent %	96	4	0	0	100
B	4	N	58	18	8	9	93
		Percent %	62	19	9	10	100
C	5	N	26	4	3	9	42
		Percent %	62	10	7	21	100
C	6	N	34	18	5	5	62
		Percent %	55	29	8	8	100
D	7	N	43	7	1	6	57
		Percent %	75	12	2	11	100
D	8	N	54	30	1	4	89
		Percent %	61	34	1	4	100
	Total	N	322	83	20	35	460
		Percent %	70	18	4	8	100

School	Teacher	Worksheets	Writing	Vocabulary	Test/Quiz	Other	Total
A	1	5	0	5	0	0	10
A	2	7	2	2	0	0	11
B	3	12	2	1	5	2	22
B	4	18	7	1	1	3	30
C	5	4	1	2	0	1	8
C	6	10	3	2	2	1	18
D	7*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
D	8	1	1	0	1	1	4
Total #		***57***	***16***	***13***	***9***	***8***	***103***
% of Total		***53***	***19***	***13***	***8***	***7***	

* NOTE: Teacher seven did not assign written work during the classes we observed.

School	Teacher		Literal	SI	CI	Other
A	1	N	58	23	6	3
		Percent	64	26	7	3
A	2	N	39	15	9	3
		Percent	59	28	13	0.5
B	3	N	151	14	6	0
		Percent	87	8	3	0
B	4	N	189	13	8	1
		Percent	85	6	3.5	5
C	5	N	111	40	17	3
		Percent	65	23	10	1.5
C	6	N	87	22	11	2
		Percent	70	18	10	2
D	7*	N	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
		Percent				
D	8	N	21	3	7	0
		Percent	66	9	22	0
Total:		N	656	130	62	25
		Percent	75	15	7	3.5
		Literal:	*65%*			
		Inferential:	*31%*			
		Other:	*4%*			

* NOTE: Teacher seven did not assign written work during the classes we observed.

School	Teacher		L	SI	CI	O	P	O-T	Total
A	1	N	3	3	0	1	11	1	19
		Percent	16	16	0	5	58	5	100
A	2	N	7	3	2	2	3	1	18
		Percent	39	17	11	11	17	5	100
B	3	N	6	0	1	1	20	0	28
		Percent	21	0	4	4	71	0	100
B	4	N	5	0	0	1	4	0	10
		Percent	50	0	0	10	40	0	100
C	5	N	2	0	1	1	12	0	16
		Percent	13	0	6	6	75	0	100
C	6	N	5	2	1	0	12	3	23
		Percent	22	9	4	0	52	13	100
D	7	N	5	0	2	3	10	4	24
		Percent	20.5	0	8	12.5	42	17	100
D	8	N	5	2	1	2	18	2	30
		Percent	16	7	3	7	60	7	100
Total		N	38	10	8	11	90	11	460
		Percent	23	6	5	6	54	6	100

Student Contributions		Teacher Contributions		Total Contributions	
Type of Interactions	**%**	**Type of Interactions**	**%**	**Type of Interactions**	**%**
Substantiated statements	11	Substantiated statements	30	Substantiated statements	20
Simple statements	76	Simple statements	23	Simple statements	52
Clarifying questions	3			Clarifying questions	2
Procedural questions	4	Procedural statements	9	Procedural	6
Off-task	6			Off-task	3
		Individual prompts	23	Individual prompts	10
		Whole class prompts	15	Whole class prompts	7
n=182		*n=146*		*n=328*	

Student Contributions		Teacher Contributions		Total Contributions	
Type of Interactions	**%**	**Type of Interactions**	**%**	**Type of Interactions**	**%**
Substantiated statements	11	Substantiated statements	38	Substantiated statements	23
Simple statements	72	Simple statements	6	Simple statements	41
Clarifying questions	0			Clarifying questions	0
Procedural questions	15	Procedural statements	17	Procedural	16
Off-task	2			Off-task	1
		Individual prompts	29	*Individual prompts*	14
		Whole class prompts	10	Whole class prompts	5
n = 54	100	*n = 48*	100	*n = 102*	100

School / Teacher			Substantiated Statements	Simple Statements	Clarifying Questions	Procedural Questions	Off-task	Substantiated Statements	Simple Statements	Procedural Statements	Individual Prompts	Whole-class Prompts	Total Interactions
A	1	#	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
A	2	#	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	8
		%	12.5	25	0	0	12.5	25	0	12.5	0	12.5	100
B	3	#	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
		%	0	33.3	0	33.3	0	0	0	33.3	0	0	100
B	4	#	4	18	0	0	0	5	1	1	8	4	41
		%	10	44	0	0	0	12	2	2	20	10	0.11
C	5	#	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	6
		%	17	50	0	0	0	33	0	0	0	0	100
C	6	#	0	7	0	1	0	2	2	0	2	0	14
		%	0	50	0	8	0	14	14	0	14	0	100
D	7	#	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	4	0	14
		%	0	29	0	14	0	21	0	8	28	0	100
D	8	#	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	0	16
		%	0	25	0	25	0	25	0	25	0	0	100
Total		#	6	39	0	8	1	18	3	8	14	5	102
		%	6	38	0	8	1	17	3	8	14	5	100

School / Teacher			Student Interactions: Substantiated Statements	Simple Statements	Clarifying Questions	Procedural Questions	Off-task	Teacher Interactions: Substantiated Statements	Simple Statements	Procedural Statements	Individual Prompts	Whole-class Prompts	Total Interactions
A	1	#	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
		%	0	75	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	100
A	2	#	0	5	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	10
		%	0	50	0	0	0	10	20	0	20	0	100
B	3	#	0	6	0	0	3	1	2	1	0	0	13
		%	0	46	0	0	23	7.5	16	7.5	0	0	100
B	4	#	9	45	2	4	3	14	11	9	12	11	120
		%	7.5	37.5	2	3	2.5	12	9	7.5	10	9	100
C	5	#	3	3	0	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	14
		%	21.5	21.5	0	0	0	21.5	21.5	0	7	7	100
C	6	#	4	24	3	3	1	12	2	2	9	2	62
		%	6	39	5	5	2	19	3	3	15	3	100
D	7	#	1	15	0	0	2	3	3	0	4	2	30
		%	3	50	0	0	7	10	10	0	13	7	100
D	8	#	3	38	0	1	1	10	9	1	6	6	75
		%	4	51	0	1.5	1.5	12.5	12	1.5	8	8	100
Total		#	20	139	5	8	10	44	33	13	34	22	328
		%	6	42	1.5	2.5	3	13.5	10	4	10.5	7	100

Notes

[1] See Chicago Public Schools website: www.cps.k12.il.us

[2] Lee, Harper. 1960. *To Kill A Mockingbird.* New York: Warner Books, Inc.

[3] For studies that have found that teachers alter their curriculum to meet expectation set by standards and assessments see Darling-Hammond, L. and Wise, A. 1985. Beyond Standardization: State Standards and School Improvement. *The Elementary School Journal, 85,* 3, 315-336.; Wilson and Corbett: 1990; Johnson, S. M. 1990. *Teachers at Work.* New York: Basic Books; Archbald, D.A. and Porter, A.C. 1994. Curriculum control and teachers□perceptions of autonomy and satisfaction. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 16,* 21-39.; Wong, K. K., Anagnostopoulos, D., Rutledge, S., Lynn, L. and Dreeben , R. 1999. *Implementation of An Educational Accountability Agenda: Integrated Governance in the Chicago Public Schools Enters its Fourth Year.* A Report from the Department of Education and Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago. Studies have also found that standards and assessments result in a curriculum that is less diverse (Smith, M.L. 1991. Putting to the Test: The Effects of External Testing on Teachers. *Educational Researcher.* June-July, 8-11.). These studies, however, have not looked at students□exposure to higher level thinking skills in high stakes contexts.

[4] At School A, we interviewed eleven English teachers (65% of the department), and 9 mathematics teachers (64% of the department). At School B, we interviewed 10 English teachers (67%) and 12 mathematics teachers (100%). At School C, we interviewed 7 English teachers (37%) and 9 math teachers (75%). At School D, we interviewed 7 English teachers (63%) and math teachers (6%).

[5] In total, we collected approximately 62 hours of observations. We observed two teachers at each of the four schools over the course of their *To Kill a Mockingbird* unit. We observed Teachers 1 and 2 at School A for 539 and 367 minutes respectively. We observed Teachers 3 and 4 at School B for 434 and 383 minutes respectively. We observed Teachers 5 and 6 at School C for 376 and 346 minutes respectively. And at School D, we observed Teachers 7 and 8 for 752 and 485 minutes respectively.

[6] Wong, K. and Anagnostopoulos, D. (1998) Can Integrated Governance Reconstruct Teaching? Lessons Learned from Two Low-performing Chicago High Schools. *Educational Policy* 12: 1 & 2, pp. 31-47. Wong K., Anagnostopoulos, D., Rutledge, S., Lynn, L., and Dreeben, R. (1999) *Implementation of an Educational Accountability Agenda: Integrated Governance in the Chicago Public Schools Enters its Fourth Year*. Department of Education and Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago: Chicago, IL.

[7] Wong K., Anagnostopoulos, D., Rutledge, S., Lynn, L., and Dreeben, R. (1999) *Implementation of an Educational Accountability Agenda: Integrated Governance in the Chicago Public Schools Enters its Fourth Year*. Department of Education and Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago: Chicago, IL.

[8] Wong K., Anagnostopoulos, D., Rutledge, S., Lynn, L., and Dreeben, R. (1999) *Implementation of an Educational Accountability Agenda: Integrated Governance in the Chicago Public Schools Enters its Fourth Year*. Department of Education and Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago: Chicago, IL.

[9] Wong, K.K. 1990. *City Choices: Education and Housing.* Albany: State University of New York; Peterson, P., Rabe, B., and Wong, K. 1986. *When Federalism Works.* Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute. Pressman, J.L. and Widlavsky, A. *Implementation.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

[10] Applebee, A.N., Burroughs, R. and Stevens, A. (2000). Creating continuity and coherence in high school literature curricula. *Research in the teaching of English*. 34:3. pp.396 - 429.

[11] Chicago Tribune, September 23, 1998

[12] Chicago Public Schools. 1997. *Expecting More: Higher Standards for Chicago□s Students. Program of Study, Grades 9 and 10: English Language Arts*. Chicago: author.

[13] Applebee, A.N., Burroughs, R. and Stevens, A. (2000). Creating continuity and coherence in high school literature curricula. *Research in the teaching of English*. 34:3. pp.396 - 429.

[14] Hillocks, G. and Ludlow, T. (1984). A taxonomy of skills in reading and interpreting fiction. *American Educational Research Journal*. 21:1, pp.7-24.

[15] Nystrand, M. (1997). Opening dialogue: Understanding the dynamics of language and learning in the English classroom. New York: Teachers College Press.

[16] Applebee, A.N. (1993). *Literature in the secondary school: Studies of curriculum and instruction in the United States*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English. Nystrand, M. (1997). *Opening dialogue: Understanding the dynamics of language and learning in the English classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press. Nystrand, M. and Gamoran,;;, A. (1991). Instructional discourse, student engagement and literature achievement. *Research in the Teaching of English*. 25:3, pp. 261-90.

[17] Hillocks, G. and Ludlow, T. (1984). A taxonomy of skills in reading and interpreting fiction. *American Educational Research Journal*. 21:1, pp.7-24.

[18] Stodolsky, Susan S. and Grossman, Pamela L. 1995. The Impact of Subject Matter on Curricular Activity: An Analysis of Five Academic Subjects. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*,2, 227-249.